

Six Stories from Six Continents: The Varied Documentation of Global Migration in the Records of the University of Glasgow¹

Rachael Jones

The University of Glasgow Archive Services hold a variety of records that can tell us about men and women who crossed the globe, to and from Scotland, for research, study, or for business. These records, held within the collections of the University and within the Scottish Business Archive, of which the University is custodian, can tell us stories from each of the world's continents. This article will highlight a sample of stories that have been discovered in the University's collections and shared on the *International Story* website: an online database where we can share and promote the biographies of individuals connected with the University who have international links. The stories selected come from six continents: Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, North America, and South America. The lives of six individuals will be explored, how the records have preserved their stories and how these journeys have been uncovered and shared among our audiences.

The University of Glasgow Archive Services are host to a variety of records, held within the collections of the University and within the Scottish Business Archive, of which the University is custodian, which allow us a window into the stories of men and women who crossed the globe, to and from Scotland, for research, study, or business. This article highlights a sample of stories, one from each of the continents – Australasia, North America, Europe, Africa, South America, and Asia – that have been discovered in the collections and shared on the University of Glasgow's *International Story* website developed by the Archives.² This site is an extension of *The University of Glasgow Story* website, an online database storing profiles and biographies of the men and women who have made a contribution to the development of the University over the past six centuries.³ Current international students were recruited in voluntary placements to research the academic careers of their historical counterparts and so far we have over 15,500 profiles for individuals linked with countries

¹ An article adapted from a presentation delivered at the Scottish Records Association Conference: 'On the Move: Researching Scottish Migrants and Immigrants to Scotland', 6 November 2015.

² <http://www.internationalstory.gla.ac.uk>.

³ <http://www.universitystory.gla.ac.uk>.

all around the world. It is an ongoing process to find more links and to write biographical profiles telling the stories of these students and staff.

Excerpts of the lives of six individuals are explored below, as well as how the records have preserved their stories and how these journeys have been uncovered and shared among our audiences. The records of Queen Margaret College reveal to us Martha Hunter Scott from Victoria, Australia; the archives are silent on some of the most remarkable parts of James McCune Smith of New York's story; the personal papers of Professor Guido Pontecorvo from Italy and Honoria Somerville Keer who became a Medical Officer in Lagos, Nigeria, offer very disparate accounts of events; and the Scottish Business Archive reveals much more than merely business dealings for James Thompson in South America and a Mr Strachan in India.

The University of Glasgow was founded in 1451 and, as one would expect, the University therefore holds many records relating to the hundreds of thousands of staff and students who have come through its doors. The first two stories in this paper come from the administrative records relating to the matriculation, examination and graduation of students.

The Queen Margaret College was established in 1883 through the incorporation of the Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women, formed in 1877 by Mrs Jessie Campbell of Tullichewan who was an active proponent of the higher education of women. The College had the aim of providing a university education for women, equal to that available to men. Initially the College mainly taught Arts subjects but in 1888 laboratories were provided for teaching science and in 1890, the Queen Margaret College Medical School was opened.⁴ The University holds the records of the Association and the College, and includes minute books, annual reports, correspondence, and financial records as well as the records of the teaching and examining of students. The student records are of particular interest to users tracing their ancestors and through them, specifically through the enrolment books, we can trace the matriculation of Martha Hunter Scott born 15 April 1870 in the town of Belfast, Victoria, Australia. Scott was following in the footsteps of her father, Thomas, and her two brothers, as a physician, enrolling as a student at Queen Margaret College Medical School in 1896.

The volumes not only record the student's name, but also their home address, payment of fees and the subjects they studied. An entry in the Faculty of Medicine enrolment book for 1901–06, records that Scott's home address was in Victoria, Australia, and that in the session 1901–02 she studied Surgery and Clinical Surgery.⁵ The records of Queen Margaret College also include course materials and from the Medical School Prospectus for 1896–97, we can

⁴ <http://www.universitystory.gla.ac.uk/women-background/>.

⁵ University of Glasgow Archive & Special Collections (hereafter UofGASC), DC233/2/7/1/3 Queen Margaret College Enrolment Book, III, 1901–02.

find out about the course content.⁶ The Queen Margaret College amalgamated with the University of Glasgow in 1892 and although the College continued to keep its own records in terms of matriculation and examination results, the graduation albums of the University now also recorded female students, and this is where Scott's graduation is noted.⁷ Martha Hunter Scott graduated MBChB with commendation from the University in 1903, making her the first Australian female medical graduate. With the help of the *International Story* website and database, we can see that she is one of six women born in Australia who graduated from the University between 1800 and 1965 whom we have discovered thus far in the records.⁸ As well as records documenting the academic studies of the Queen Margaret College students, the institution also followed their professional careers after graduation. One collection series is 'Graduate and Career Records' and includes lists of names and addresses of former students and details of their careers within correspondence. From a register of graduate addresses from 1906, we can see that upon graduation, Martha Hunter Scott took her training back to Australia and returned to Melbourne while the General Council Registers record her designation as MBChB, suggesting she practised medicine.⁹ Moreover, the College records have a collection of photographs of staff and students, including a carefully annotated photograph of Martha Hunter Scott (Plate 1). Photographs of students are quite rare within university administrative records, so it is a particularly nice addition to the story to have her graduation photograph so that we may put a face to her name.¹⁰ We can only speculate on Scott's personal reasons for choosing to study at the University of Glasgow, however the University's reputation as the first institution in Scotland from which females graduated in medicine on equal terms with their male counterparts may have attracted her to follow in the footsteps of Glasgow's female medical pioneers.¹¹

Another international story from the student records is that of James McCune Smith who travelled from the USA to study at the University of Glasgow. James McCune Smith was born a slave in 1813 in New York City, but was liberated by the New York State's Emancipation Act of 1827.¹² Despite the

⁶ UofGASC, DC233/2/9/1/7 Queen Margaret College School of Medicine for Women, Prospectus for session 1896–97, 1896.

⁷ UofGASC, R1/4/2 Graduation Album of Undergraduate Degrees in Medicine, 1897–1947.

⁸ <http://www.internationalstory.gla.ac.uk/country/?id=14>.

⁹ UofGASC, DC233/2/10/1/1 List of names and addresses of Queen Margaret College medical graduates, 1894–1934; DC183/11/35 General Council Register, 1908.

¹⁰ UofGASC, DC233/2/22/2/42 Photograph of Martha Hunter Scott, 1903.

¹¹ J. Geyer-Kordesch and R. Ferguson, *Blue Stockings, Black Gowns, White Coats: A Brief History of Women Entering Higher Education and the Medical Profession in Scotland in Celebration of One Hundred Years of Women Graduates at the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1995), 4.

¹² *International Story* profile for James McCune Smith: <http://www.internationalstory.gla.ac.uk/person/?id=WH24115>.

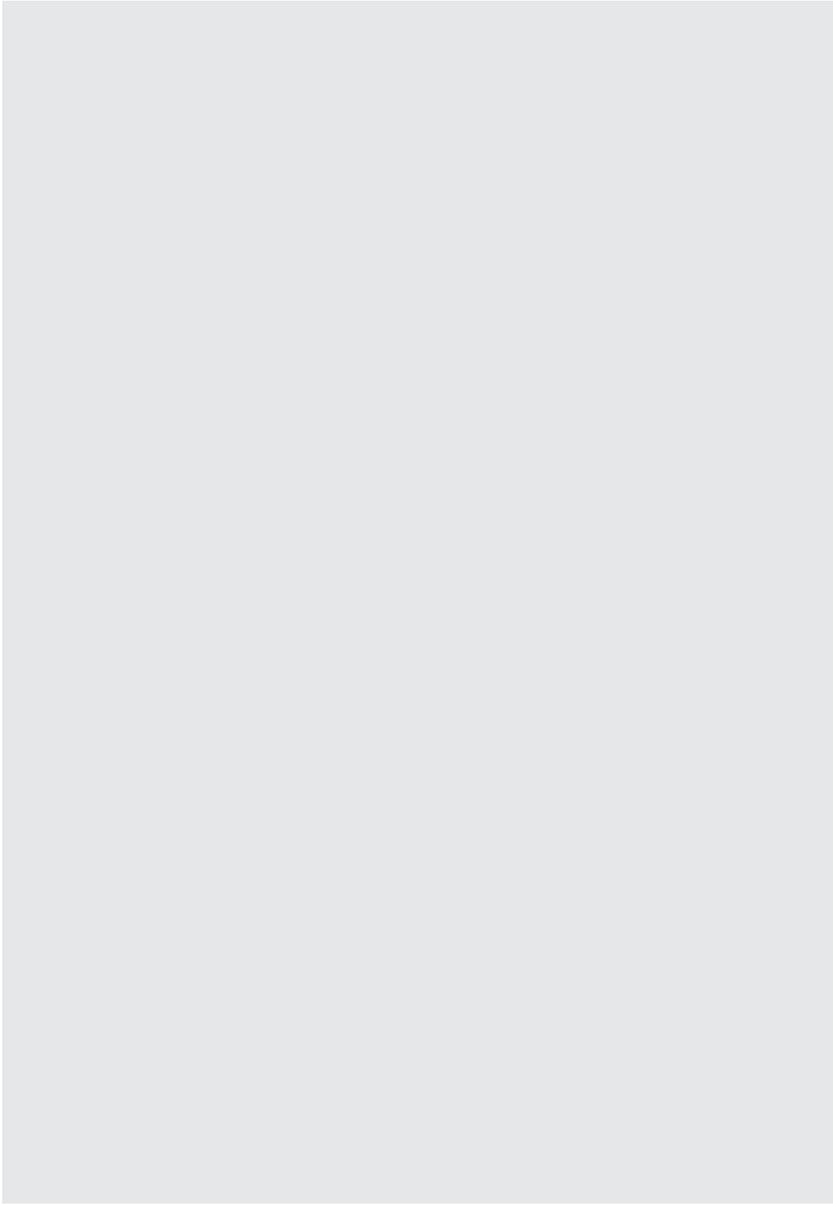


Plate 1 Graduation photograph of Martha Hunter Scott, 1903. University of Glasgow Archive Services, DC233/2/22/2/42.

Emancipation Act, Smith was denied admission to universities in the USA on account of his race. He was welcomed by the University of Glasgow, however, and first matriculated at the University in 1832, as recorded in the matriculation albums.¹³ Matriculation volumes record basic biographical information about a student, such as their name, their father's name, and where they were born. In Smith's medical matriculation record, the subjects he chose to study are also listed, which, in the session 1835–36, were 'Medicine' and 'Surgery'.¹⁴ Class catalogues give us further information about each subject Smith elected to study, for example, Greek, Logic and Humanities.¹⁵ We can see from the Prize Lists that he was a very able student and flourished at the University, gaining a First Class position in Logic for 'general eminence and superiority in the various exercises and examinations of the Class throughout the session' in 1833.¹⁶ The other men mentioned in this prize list for Logic class are all from the UK, the majority being from Glasgow or Edinburgh, with the exception of one other man, Charles W. Young from Java. This reflects trends found in other administrative records, namely that the majority of students in mid-nineteenth-century classes were British. The prize lists show that Smith was a very capable student – so accomplished, in fact, that he graduated three times from the University: BA in 1835, MA in 1836, and MD in 1837. These are recorded in the graduation albums of the University that graduates signed at their ceremonies.¹⁷ The convention in the graduation albums up to, and including, the nineteenth century was to sign your name followed by your birth country, both in Latin form, and so Smith's graduation records read: 'Jacobus McCune Smith, Americanus'.¹⁸

Perhaps what is more interesting about the story of James McCune Smith is what the records do not reveal. With the MD he attained in 1837, Smith became the first African American to receive a university medical degree anywhere in the world (Plate 2). This sort of contextual information is not recorded in the University administrative records and nor is his African American heritage or the colour of his skin. The records tell us that he was born in New York but we did not discover that he left the USA, and the discrimination he faced there, to attain a university education in Scotland until a researcher alerted us to his story. That Smith's race was not recorded in the University records suggests that it was not deemed important in terms of his higher education there. This also reminds us, however, that wider research is required to build the context around these individuals' stories and to complete the picture as well as produce

¹³ W. Innes Addison, *Matriculation Albums of the University of Glasgow from 1728 to 1858* (Glasgow, 1913).

¹⁴ UofGASC, GUA31247 Medical Matriculations, 1822–43.

¹⁵ UofGASC, R9/1/1 Class catalogues, 1794–1838.

¹⁶ UofGASC, R7/1/2 University of Glasgow Prize List, 1833–34, 9.

¹⁷ UofGASC, GUA26676 Master of Arts Graduation Album, 181, 184; GUA26677 Doctor of Medicine Graduation Album, 1728–1888, 69.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

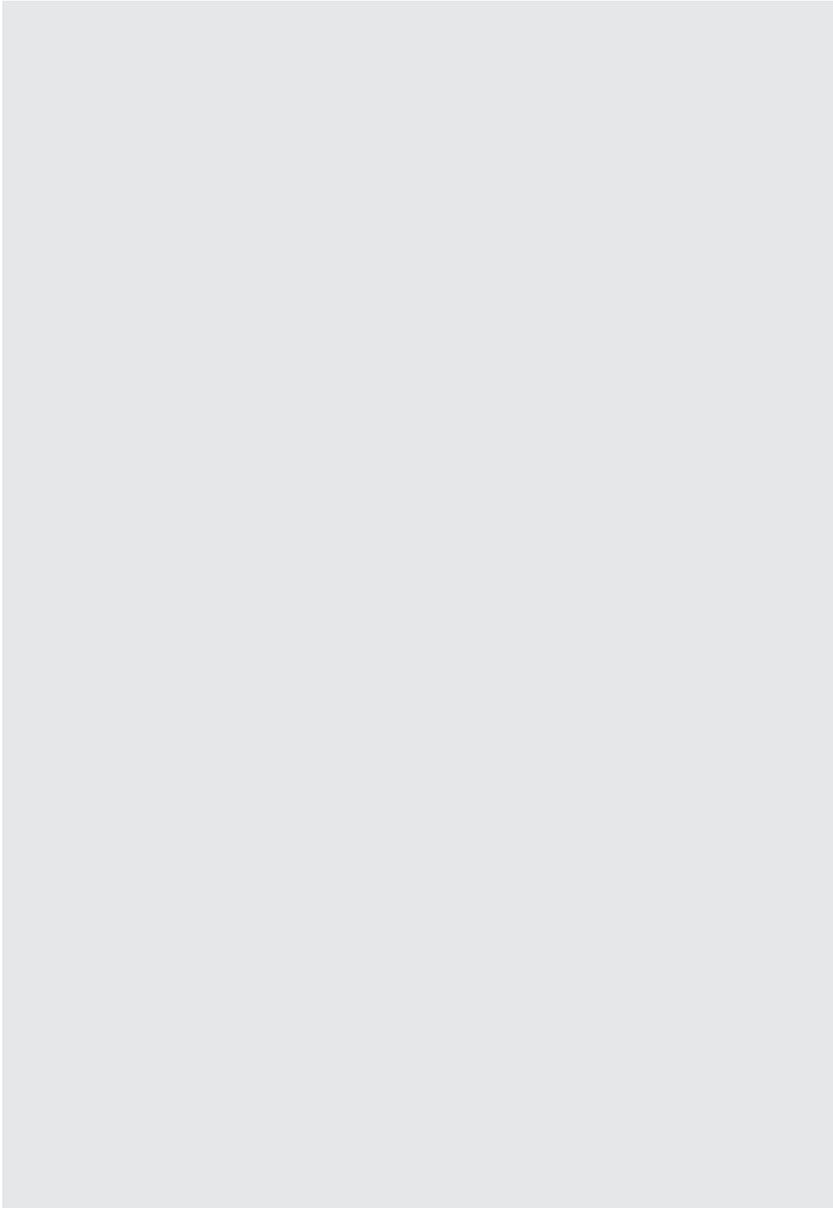


Plate 2 James McCune Smith's entry in the Doctor of Medicine Graduation Album, 1728–1888, 1837, 69. University of Glasgow Archive Services, GUA26677.

more well-rounded biographies for the *International Story* website. Further investigation tells us that James McCune Smith returned to New York in 1837 where he opened his own pharmacy and practice, treating both black and white patients, becoming an abolitionist and educator, and later being recognised as one of the foremost black intellectuals in nineteenth-century America.¹⁹

As well as the official administrative papers, recording the students who matriculated, studied and were examined at the University, the Archives also hold collections of the professional and personal papers of past professors and students. One such collection allows us to learn about world-changing geneticist Guido Pontecorvo, who escaped from Fascist Europe to Scotland just prior to the Second World War (Plate 3). Guido Pontecorvo (1907–99) was the University's first Professor of Genetics and his papers were donated to the University by the family in 2009.²⁰ The collection is extensive and includes biographical material such as copies of articles and obituaries, and from here we learn about the early life of Pontecorvo including his birth and education in Pisa before fleeing Fascist Italy in 1938.²¹ Moreover, one letter in the collection records Pontecorvo's dismissal from the 'Ministero dell'Agricoltura e delle Foreste' by the new Fascist administration on account of his race.²² A series of correspondence in the collection tells us of his academic career and appointments at the University with, for example, letters between Pontecorvo and Sir Hector Hetherington, Principal of the University from 1936 to 1961, about the formation of a new Genetics Department of which Pontecorvo was the first Professor in 1955.²³ This is also reported in press clippings that are part of this series, as well as a bundle of 33 letters congratulating Pontecorvo on his appointment.²⁴ Pontecorvo kept a list of the Genetics department staff at the University of Glasgow between 1945 and 1968, providing valuable information about the team in the early years of the department.²⁵ Not only was Guido Pontecorvo a pioneer in that he was the first Professor of Genetics

¹⁹ T. M. Morgan, 'The Education and Medical Practice of Dr. James McCune Smith (1813–1865), First Black American to Hold a Medical Degree', *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 95, no. 7 (July 2003), 603–14.

²⁰ Online catalogue for the collection: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugc198>.

²¹ UofGASC, UGC198/1/2 Series of biographical material relating to Guido Pontecorvo (online catalogue entry: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugc198/1>).

²² UofGASC, UGC198/2/2/1/1 Letter to Pontecorvo, dated February 1939, from the Ministero dell'Agricoltura e delle Foreste dismissing him from his position on the cattle-breeding programme at the Ispettorato Compartimentale Agrario.

²³ UofGASC, UGC198/2 Correspondence between Pontecorvo and Principal Hector Hetherington concerning the Department of Genetics at the University of Glasgow, 1947–58 (online catalogue entry: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugc198/2>).

²⁴ UofGASC, UGC198/2/1/3 Press cuttings and letters relating to Pontecorvo's appointment to the Chair of Genetics at the University of Glasgow, December 1955.

²⁵ UofGASC, UGC198/2/1/2 List of Genetics Department (Glasgow) staff members, 1945–68.

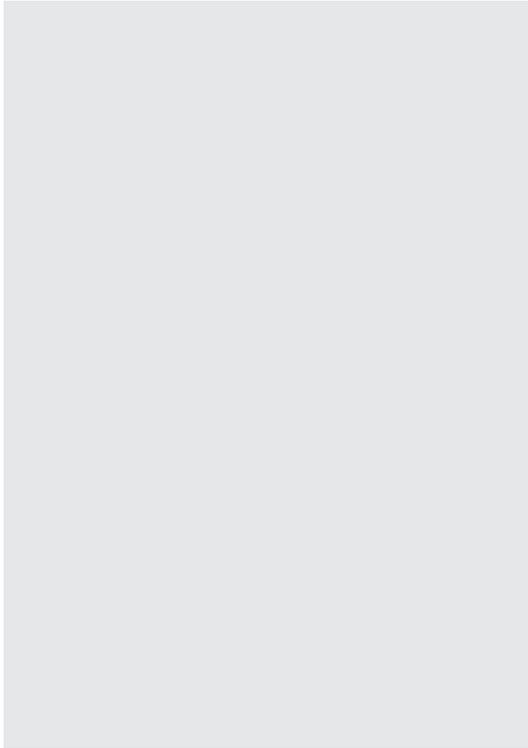


Plate 3 Professor Guido Pontecorvo, 1955. University of Glasgow Archive Services, UPI/507/1.

at the University, he has also been described as ‘one of the founding fathers of modern genetics’ and his papers track his world-changing discoveries in the field.²⁶ Records relating to Pontecorvo’s wider research include notes and correspondence about research trips to locations such as the Soviet Union, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, and Iran; research slides of detailed images of alpine plants; and a set of 124 of Pontecorvo’s publications, representing the culmination of his research.²⁷

Pontecorvo filed two patents, with Joseph Alan Roper and Giuseppe Sermonti as co-inventors, for his most notable discoveries in Genetics that he called ‘Parasexual Cycle Genetics’ and this, too, is recorded in his collection with

²⁶ University of Glasgow, *World-Changing* entry: <http://www.worldchanging.glasgow.ac.uk/notable-people/?id=73>.

²⁷ UofGASC, UGC198/5; UGC198/6; UGC198/7/2.

correspondence, notes and legal papers.²⁸ In simple terms, Guido Pontecorvo's research focused on the use of micro-organisms to probe fundamental mechanisms of heredity, especially the structure and function of the gene, a world-changing discovery with implications for advancing human genetics.²⁹

While the papers of Guido Pontecorvo provide a valuable record of his work, his family papers reveal the personal side of his life in Scotland. Photograph albums, personal correspondence, and the particularly fascinating guestbook of the Pontecorvo household dating from 1939 to 2007 and recording visits from some very notable scientists including Francis Harry Compton Crick, co-discoverer of the DNA molecule, allow us to see that Pontecorvo was a very popular and much-loved friend to many in Scotland.³⁰

As with those stories found within the student records of the University, the story of Guido Pontecorvo is shared on the University of Glasgow's *International Story* website.³¹ The papers of his world-changing research in particular have also been made discoverable for current-day researchers through contributing to the Wellcome Trust 'Codebreakers: Makers of Modern Genetics' digitisation project, and his papers are fully accessible online through the Wellcome Library.³²

Another collection of personal papers in the University Archive is that of Honoria Somerville Keer, a medical graduate. Keer was born in Toronto, Canada, on 26 December 1883 to British parents, and she travelled to Scotland to study medicine at the University of Glasgow from 1903 until her graduation in 1910. As such, records of her academic life can be found as part of the administrative records of the University as described earlier, though we also hold a collection of her personal papers which reveal much more information about her life and travels. After graduation, Keer was very active in the First World War and served in the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service. In this capacity she travelled extensively, first in France and then in Macedonia. Her collection includes her British passport, issued in Salonica in July 1917, which provides details of her physical appearance, including a photograph, and her travels in Europe.³³

After the end of the war, Keer spent a long time in Nigeria. In 1925 she was appointed to the post of Lady Medical Officer at the Massey Street Dispensary in Lagos, Nigeria, and served in this role until 1934. Records in her collection include her application for the post of Medical Officer, the employment agreement between Dr Keer and the Crown Agents for the Colonies for the

²⁸ UofGASC, UGC198/3/4 Correspondence relating to patents and Pontecorvo's research work on Aspergillus, from 1945 to the 1980s.

²⁹ University of Glasgow, *World-Changing* entry: <http://www.worldchanging.glasgow.ac.uk/article/?id=81>.

³⁰ UofGASC, UGC198/9/2/1 Pontecorvo household guestbook, 1939–2007.

³¹ <http://www.internationalstory.gla.ac.uk/person/?id=WH0186>.

³² <http://wellcomelibrary.org/collections/digital-collections/makers-of-modern-genetics/>.

³³ UofGASC, DC171/1/6 Dr Keer's British passport, issued in Salonica, 1917–19.

position, and correspondence as to her working conditions and her health.³⁴ One exchange between Keer and the Director of Medical and Sanitary Service in Lagos from 8 September 1927 concerns her studying the Yoruba language to improve her ability to communicate with colleagues and patients.³⁵ She appears to have continued her studies into diseases while in Nigeria as her collection contains ‘Notes for a lecture on West Africa and its diseases’, primarily notes on Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Nigeria.³⁶ The collection also contains a number of photographs of Keer, her staff and her hospital in Lagos, providing interesting records of her premises and colleagues (Plate 4).³⁷

As well as appearing on the *International Story* website, Honoria Somerville Keer is part of the University of Glasgow’s First World War Roll of Honour and her story was featured prominently in a student placement exhibition on the Scottish Women’s Hospitals, produced for the University of Glasgow Great War Project.³⁸

As described above, the personal collections of staff and students of the University can provide a fantastic resource from which to find out about their lives. They support the official records by placing them in their broader social context and for individuals who have travelled to and from Scotland it can provide insights into the reasons for this movement and their experiences. Hence, such collections are actively collected by the University, with the caveat that limited space and resources means that personal papers for every staff and student cannot be acquired. The following criteria, set out in the University collecting policy, must therefore be applied: ‘national or international reputation in one’s respective academic field, records of one’s service with Glasgow University or affiliated institution and contribution to its growth and development and service and contribution in local or national affairs’.³⁹ The archive ensures to collect a broad range of personal papers to provide a snapshot of different experiences of the University and academic life thereafter, and the collections of Guido Pontecorvo and Honoria Somerville Keer are strong additions.

As well as records relating to the University, the University of Glasgow Archives & Special Collections are also the custodian of the Scottish Business Archive, covering the whole of Scotland and dating from the eighteenth century

³⁴ UofGASC, DC171/3/5 Correspondence between the Colonial Office, the Government of Nigeria and Dr Keer, 1924–31.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ UofGASC, DC171/3/14 ‘Notes for a lecture’ on West Africa and its diseases, early twentieth century.

³⁷ UofGASC, DC171/3/15/1/38–43 Photograph of members of staff at Lagos Hospital, Nigeria, c.1931.

³⁸ <http://www.universitystory.gla.ac.uk/ww1-biography/?id=78>; <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/historyresearch/researchprojects/greatwar/>.

³⁹ University of Glasgow Archives Collecting Policy: http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_61203_en.pdf.

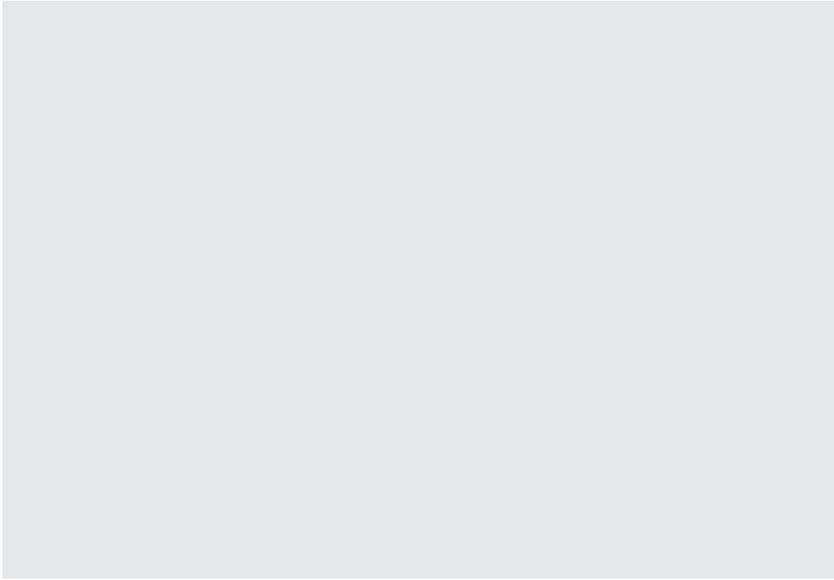


Plate 4 Members of staff at Lagos Hospital, Nigeria, *c.*1931. University of Glasgow Archive Services, DC171/3/15/1/38.

to the present. It includes almost all types of business and industrial activity with over 400 collections from banking, confectioners and distillers to retail, solicitors and undertakers. The collections were initiated in 1959 by Sydney Checkland, the first Professor of Economic History, and have been managed by Archive Services since 1975.

One business for which we have a large collection of records is Gourock Ropeworks Company, ropemakers and textile manufacturers, from Port Glasgow. The company was founded as Port Glasgow Rope & Duct Company in 1736 and expanded internationally during the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ They opened their first branch to deal with overseas trade in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1888, and traded chiefly in manila rope, cotton and flax sailcloth, and Birkmyre's waterproof cloth (Plate 5).⁴¹ The business of this South American branch is recorded in papers such as the Report on Accounts, sales figures and financial correspondence. The conditions for staff who were sent out to manage the branch are revealed through the collection of

⁴⁰ Online catalogue for Gourock Ropeworks Co Ltd: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugd042>.

⁴¹ Administrative History for Gourock Ropes and Canvas Ltd, Buenos Aires: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugd042/6/10>.

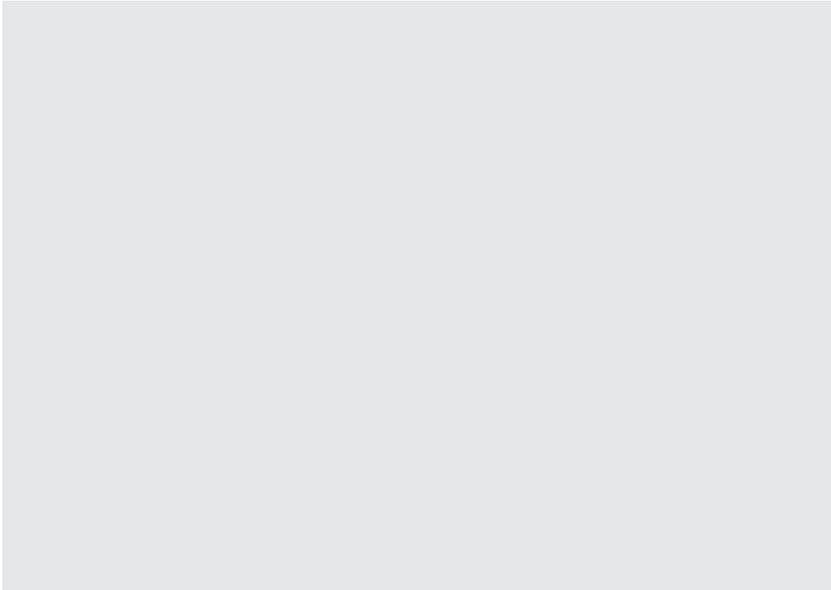


Plate 5 Exterior of Gourock Ropeworks building in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1950.
University of Glasgow Archive Services, UGD42/9/4/2.

correspondence dating between 1954 and 1959.⁴² These letters tell us about the manager, Mr James Thompson, and his experiences in managing the Argentine branch. Thompson regularly reported back to a Mr Campbell in the Glasgow Office about the economic and political situation in Argentina in the 1950s, including information about inflation, the Argentine Government's efforts to reduce expenditure, and import restrictions that were hampering the business in the region.⁴³ The Argentine Government were a particularly important customer for manila ropes, previously imported from Port Glasgow, but produced in Buenos Aires by the 1930s, and so their fortunes were of great interest to the company. The branch appears to have ceased trading in the 1960s and so does not seem to have survived the difficulties Mr Thompson described.

The final story in this paper is drawn from one of the Scottish Business Archive's largest collections, that of James Finlay & Co Ltd, textile manufacturers, tea planters and merchants, from Glasgow. The company began in 1750 as a textile firm, but began to diversify into tea estate management in

⁴² UofGASC, UGD42/6/10/4 Correspondence with Gourock Ropes and Canvas Ltd, Buenos Aires branch, 1954–59.

⁴³ Ibid.

1882 and became the leading Indian tea suppliers in the UK market.⁴⁴ The records for this business include the common types of records found in any business collection such as financial, production, and administrative records. A particularly fascinating record type from the extensive collection, however, is the ‘Managers and Assistants Letter books’ found within the staff records. They contain a wealth of information about the men who were recruited in Britain to manage the Finlay tea estate business overseas and contain summaries of the correspondence back and forth from the local superintendents to head office in Glasgow about the recruitment and performance of individual staff members. This gives us a rare and valuable insight into the experiences of these men as they progressed through their career in a foreign country. As each man was appointed, information was recorded about their home address, previous work experience and their general health, and they contain very personal comments, both positive and negative, which can shed light on the personalities of the men who managed the estates as well as the practical details of their everyday lives far from home.

One particularly fascinating story is that of Mr A. W. Strachan who accepted a three-year contract with Finlay, Muir & Company (a predecessor company of James Finlay & Co Ltd) in 1903. The first entry in the letter books for Mr Strachan, dated 27 November 1903, records his appointment to the position and his salary, that would grow from 250 rupees in his first year to 300 rupees by his third year, with additional ‘pony and servant allowance’.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, by 17 December 1903, Mr Strachan was plagued by ill health, suffering from fever and gastritis to such an extent that he was sent home to recover in a more ‘temperate climate’.⁴⁶ Strachan did recover and by late 1904 he was posted to Goombira, India. In the following years, reports of his conduct are largely favourable:

He has laid himself out to get into the ways of the District. He has got on well with the labour and is very conscientious. He is very pleasant to work with and is not above asking if he is not sure about anything ...

A quiet sensitive man, may yet make a passable Planter ...

Mr Strachan continues to work hard and is more attentive to details. He has much improved all round as an assistant. His conduct is excellent.⁴⁷

In August 1908, however, Mr Strachan’s circumstances changed dramatically when he was attacked by a tiger (Plate 6):

⁴⁴ Administrative History for James Finlay & Co Ltd: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugd091/1>.

⁴⁵ UofGASC, UGD91/1/6/3/1/1 A. W. Strachan within James Finlay Ltd Managers and Assistants book, 1903, 656.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 661–5.

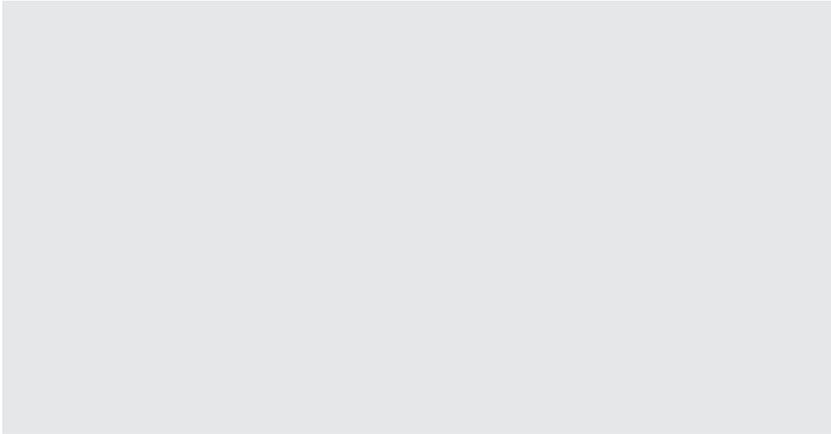


Plate 6 Details of the tiger attack upon A. W. Strachan within James Finlay's *Managers and Assistants* book, 1908, p. 939. University of Glasgow Archive Services, UGD91/1/6/3/1/1.

We much regret to inform you that Mr Strachan has been the victim of an unfortunate accident having been very severely mauled by a tiger and it has been found necessary by Drs Silvester and Burkitt, who were both attending him, to amputate his right arm and also his left leg below the knee.⁴⁸

Following this attack Mr Strachan was transferred to the nearby town of Dullabcherra and then to the general hospital in Calcutta until he was fit enough to return home in November on the ship *Simla* with a first-class passage arranged by the company.⁴⁹

Mentions of attacks by animals in the registers are thankfully rare but unfortunately, in the case of Mr Strachan, his injuries were such that he could not be reappointed to work with the company on their estates again. The registers record no further details about him after 1909. The tragic story of Mr Strachan is recorded within the staff records of James Finlay in startling detail and these volumes record the fortunes of thousands of people who worked for Finlay's various branches around the world between 1903 and the 1970s. One can learn a great deal about an individual staff member, and also see patterns in the experiences of tea estate managers with health problems common to many, particularly in the early months of employment.

These records from the Scottish Business Archive are very valuable resources for finding out about the experiences of employees of Scottish businesses who travelled to work in continents like Asia and South America,

⁴⁸ Ibid., 939.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 943.

and the University's Archives & Special Collections has sought to share this information with potential researchers. The story of Mr Strachan from the records of James Finlay was published in the BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are* magazine in October 2010 and also on *The Working Archive* blog.⁵⁰

The administrative records of the University of Glasgow do not merely record the names and degrees of students who have come through its doors since 1451, they are fantastic sources of information for those looking to trace ancestors, or who have an interest in what life was like for students in the past. They are valuable records for finding out about those who travelled to Glasgow from around the world to study at the University. The records of Queen Margaret College tell us of young women, like Martha Hunter Scott, who travelled across the globe to train in medicine at the first university in Scotland to produce female medical graduates, on equal terms with their male counterparts. Though the student records of James McCune Smith tell of a very intelligent man, born in New York, who won academic prizes during his studies and gained three degrees in the 1830s, the records do not reveal the most remarkable part of Smith's story and are silent about his accomplishment in becoming the first African American to gain a medical degree. This absence of context from the administrative records has prompted the recognition that further research is needed to flesh out the stories of these individuals and also that collecting the personal papers of students and staff can help provide more source types to support this kind of wider, contextual research. The personal papers of Professor Guido Pontecorvo allow us to learn of his experiences of Fascist Europe in the beginnings of the Second World War, as well as how he pioneered the teaching of genetics at the University while conducting his own world-changing research. His family papers allow us to see how well he settled in Scotland despite a troubled beginning. The personal papers of Honoria Somerville Keer, on the other hand, document the academic and medical career of a very determined and professional woman who travelled extensively during the First World War, and then took up a senior position in Africa for almost ten years. As well as those who travelled for study and research, the Scottish Business Archive tells us of migration for business and experiences as the employee of a Scottish company. The story of Mr James Thompson shows us that the fortunes of an international branch of a business were completely reliant on the local political and economic situation, and depended on managers to report back to the company head office so that they might decide the best way to develop the branch and conduct business. South America's economic situation in the 1950s was a struggle for the rope manufacturers who had to cease trading in the continent. The staff records of managers and assistants who worked on the Indian tea estates of James Finlay & Co Ltd provide startling detail of the experiences of working in a country with a climate and conditions poles apart from that of Scotland, and the effects of this on health

⁵⁰ <https://workingarchive.wordpress.com/2013/06/10/tigerattack/>.

and well-being. The letter books offer insight into the characters of the men, analysing their strengths and weaknesses, and are some of the most personal and detailed records in the entire Scottish Business Archive.

As mentioned above, we can only speculate the complex and varied reasons these individuals chose to travel to and from Scotland. Glasgow's legacy as, arguably, the birthplace of the Scottish Enlightenment, however, with many great enlightenment figures such as Francis Hutcheson and Adam Smith teaching at the University of Glasgow helped to cement the institution's reputation at the forefront of Scottish education. This coupled with early advances in an equal education for women may have contributed to the decisions of Scott, Smith and Keer to study at the University and attracted academics such as Pontecorvo to carve a path for their own subjects. In terms of business across the globe, strong links with India are certainly no surprise considering Glasgow's reputation as the 'second city of the British Empire' and, as a city world-renowned for its heavy industry, a Glasgow-based company would seem like a sound choice for South American customers.⁵¹

Beyond mere administrative details, the University of Glasgow Archives are home to a wealth of records that record migration and movement to and from almost every continent of the globe.

A selection of further reading

University of Glasgow History

University of Glasgow, *The University of Glasgow through Five Centuries* (Glasgow, 1951)

A. L. Brown and M. S. Moss, *The University of Glasgow: 1451–2001* (Glasgow, 2001)

J. Durkan and J. Kirk, *The University of Glasgow, 1451–1577* (Glasgow, 1977)

M. S. Moss, J. Forbes Munro and R. H. Trainor, *University, City and State: the University of Glasgow since 1870* (Edinburgh, 2000)

D. Murray, *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow: some chapters in the history of the University* (Glasgow, 1927)

History of Genetics

The Wellcome Library research resource, 'Codebreakers: Makers of Modern Genetics': <http://wellcomelibrary.org/collections/digital-collections/makers-of-modern-genetics/>

Scottish Industry and Business History

Archives Hub administrative history of James Finlay & Co. Ltd: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugd091/1>

⁵¹ 'Second City of the Empire', *The Glasgow Story*, <http://www.theglasgowstory.com/story/?id=TGSD0>.

- Archives Hub administrative history of Gourock Ropeworks Co. Ltd: <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb248-ugd042>
- James Finlay & Company Limited: Manufacturers and East India Merchants, 1750–1950* (Glasgow, 1951)
- Scottish Business and Industrial History: the Journal of the Business Archives Council of Scotland* (2008–; produced annually)
- J. Crompton, *Forth and Clyde: a Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Central Scotland* (London, 2002)
- M. S. Moss and J. R. Hume, *Workshop of the British Empire: Engineering and Shipbuilding in the West of Scotland* (London, 1977)
- P. L. Payne (ed.), *Studies in Scottish Business History* (London, 1967)